

# **Congress of the United States**

**Washington, DC 20515**

April 17, 2020

The Honorable Elaine L. Chao  
US Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

We are writing to express our support for the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) applications for the US Department of Transportation's BUILD grant program. They will be submitting two projects which were compiled to focus on the needs of the Texas energy sector and address key problem areas in the Permian Basin. These projects include: the Reeves County Improvement Project and the Interstate 20 Energy Sector Safety Improvement Project.

These projects will provide Texans across the state who have been affected by the boom in the energy industry with critical safety and congestion improvement projects, including grade separations, wider roads, and strong pavement that will ultimately reduce life-cycle costs for all of the affected roads. The two separate projects have been prioritized through working with local and regional governments, citizens, and private entities on a roadway improvement plan. In addition to the funds received through this grant, TxDOT plans to leverage state funding sources from energy resource production such as oil and gas severance taxes.

Roads in the Permian Basin have experienced significant damage from trucks hauling water, sand, equipment, and product needed to tap the exponential increase in oil and gas production. While the Permian Basin represents ten percent of Texas' economy, it makes up thirty percent of all national oil and gas production. To address this growth, TxDOT has planned more than 1,700 miles of improvements including pavement strengthening and the addition of shoulders and passing lanes. These projects would particularly benefit residents who live in rural areas of the state; rural connectivity remains a priority in achieving a fully integrated transportation system for Texas.

Oil and gas production in the Permian Basin is projected to double by 2023, meaning Texas would yield sixty percent of the net global output in this timeframe. Addressing the needs of the roads in the Permian Basin ensures that the economic productivity of the region can continue to benefit the state and nation at large, while maintaining safety for Texas's many motorists. The BUILD grant funds will allow TxDOT to connect the local needs of the Permian Basin with state and national planning efforts.

My colleagues and I appreciate your swift and thoughtful consideration of TxDOT's applications for this crucial funding opportunity.

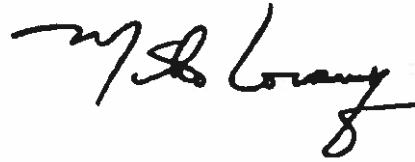
**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

---

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Will Hurd". The letters are cursive and fluid.

Will Hurd  
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "K. Michael Conway". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "K".

K. Michael Conway  
Member of Congress